



THE FAMILY REUNION

A Vacation Fantasia
By
CHARLES A. SELDEN
Pictures by Albert Levering



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points of historical interest in New York and letting her sit in Washington's pew in St. Paul's, something that every American child should do, her father said, rather haughtily, when he got back to work and a friend asked him if he had been troubled any with seasickness on the way over.

But things weren't so bad in this tenth year of the Hopin household. The January estimate had called for \$870, and the June fact was \$83 which John had hoarded, plus three dollars and forty-six cents which Mrs. Hopin had saved by cutting the milk down to a pint a day in the desperate struggle of April to save Southern California. Besides that, there was almost a dollar in Polly's bank.

So the prospects were particularly bright, and there was nothing to do but to decide where to go within an eighty-seven-dollar radius. Even that difficulty was removed when Mrs. Hopin received notice of the Jones family reunion and old-home week that was to be held up in New Hampshire. Mrs. Hopin was a Jones.

The fare up and back would be only twenty-seven dollars, even if the conductor did collect for the child, which wasn't at all likely. So they bought clothes with the balance to buoy up the reputation that John had with his wife's relatives of having lots of means, partly because he worked in New York, and partly because of the enthusiastic letters Mrs. Hopin wrote home from time to time.

So the guide-books and steamship folders were put away for another

year, and John started in to read the colonial history of the New Hampshire and Vermont boundary dispute as a preliminary to the trip. That was his way. He couldn't take Polly to Coney Island for a ride on the merry-go-round without first sending to the State Geologist for a report on the formation of the beaches.

Mrs. Hopin, knowing his weakness, humored him in the boundary dispute for one whole evening, and then declared that they would have to spend the rest of the time, before their departure, in brushing up on the Jones family connections and studying the pictures of aunts, cousins, and remote relatives, so that they wouldn't make any blunders at the reunion.

"It will be just as easy," she said when he demurred, "as learning the names of all the kings of England and of their wives, which you insisted on our doing two years ago, because you said it would enable us to get so much more enjoyment out of visiting the old English castles."

So John took a lesson in aunts, whose pictures Mrs. Hopin had spread out on the couch.

There's Aunt Betsy, to begin with," she said. "She's father's eldest sister, and she's the one you mustn't look like that. You got real excited

Hardicanute called Aunt Maria a deaf old osteopathist at Aunt Mary's wedding to father's oldest."

"Now stop, John, or I won't go on any vacation at all this year. This is the first reunion the Jones family has ever had, and you ought to be nice about it."

"I was only fooling. I remember every word you said, and tomorrow I'll draw up a family tree to study on the train. Now, are there any special uncle tips that I ought to have for this outing?"

"Uncle James is a Judge or a justice of the peace or something. They all call him Judge, anyway, and you must. He'll probably sit at the head of the table part of the time, and Uncle William the rest of the time, because he has got one of the biggest stores in Worcester. Uncle Joseph is the doctor that married Aunt Mary. That's all I'll tell you tonight."

"Do you think we will have a good time?"

"Well, it won't be Southern France, but we've got to go."

The next morning John Hopin went to the Astor Library to consult a book on genealogies, hurriedly copied several very neat designs in family trees, caught his wife and daughter at the train, and the vacation journey was begun. It was a successful trip. The conductor did not collect for Polly. The family tree branches were all properly labeled by Mrs. Hopin before the train reached New Haven, and when they arrived at Boston John could say over the whole Jones family, down to second cousins' husbands, with his eyes shut. Between Boston and the old home town he passed a creditable examination on the family quarrels and denominational leanings, had time for a smoke, and managed to give Polly a little improving instruction on the boundary dispute, so that she could talk intelligently with Uncle James, the Judge.

Aunt Maria did come on from Indiana, and the first thing she did after climbing out of the surrey was to fall on Aunt Frances' neck and kiss her for two minutes.

John Hopin looked at his notes surreptitiously and then whispered to his wife that she had got things mixed on Maria and Frances, but he was simply told to behave and wait.

Uncle William of Worcester remarked to Aunt Betsy that that wouldn't last long, and said something about cats and dogs before night.

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